

## **PUBLIC HOUSING NEEDS**

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### ***Public Housing Improvements***

The Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) has been selected by HUD as one of thirty authorities nationwide to take part in HUD's Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration. MTW offers high-performing housing authorities the opportunity to assume responsibility for local determination of many program parameters, in hopes that they will be able to better cope with decreasing federal subsidies without reducing the housing services they provide. The City of Cambridge welcomes the CHA's participation in MTW and notes that adapting to local factors is especially important in Cambridge as the City and its housing market continues to adjust to the end of rent control, and escalating land and housing costs.

The Cambridge Housing Authority was awarded a \$5 million HOPE VI revitalization grant for the elderly for its oldest federally -assisted elderly development, John F. Kennedy Apartments. The CHA also plans to leverage more than \$17 million from other sources, for a total development cost of \$22.5 million; \$19 million allows the CHA to comprehensively modernize the building, reconfigure cramped studio units into one-bedroom units, and to develop 25 units of assisted living housing. The remaining \$3.5 million, including \$560,000 in HOME fund support from the City and \$250,000 in McKinney Acquisition grant funds, acquired 14 one-bedroom scattered site units targeted to the young disabled population. Related to this project, the CHA is exploring the possibility that it could provide up to 39 rental subsidies for moderate to low-income families with incomes between 50%-80% of area median income at a non-profit development. To date, CHA has acquired 14 scattered site units. These plans resulted in no net loss of affordable housing with the potential to increase the number of units by up to thirty-nine. Construction began in January of 2002.

The CHA successfully applied for Resident Opportunity and Supportive Services grant (ROSS) of \$ 600,000 (3 year term) for Federal FY 2002. These funds are supporting the CHA's award-winning youth unemployment prevention program, the Work Force. CHA has also received two additional federal supportive services grants, for Service Coordinators. These grants total \$384,797: \$200,335 (one year term) for its federally-assisted conventional public housing and \$184,462 (three year term) for the CHA's Roosevelt Towers and Putnam School developments.

The Public Housing Drug Elimination Program from HUD (PHDEP) was ended by Congressional action. No new funds are available from HUD for FY2004, this program used to support security patrols, pre-employment training for public housing youth, and security coordination with the local police and prosecutors. The program also helped support the Recreational Activities Program (RAP) at Washington Elms and Newtowne Court developments, a program operated by residents of the two developments to provide sports activities, trips, arts and crafts, and other activities to young residents. Losing the

funds provided by the PHDEP, a program that originated in 1989, is serious blow to CHA's efforts in both lease enforcement and youth programming.

***Public Housing Resident Initiative***

An integral part of the Cambridge Housing Authority's program is the involvement of its residents in management operations. For much of the Authority's history, federal and state-funded developments had tenant councils and the Board of the CHA has included at least one tenant, although the current Board includes two residents.

Over the coming year, the CHA residents will continue their ongoing participation in the selection of authority staff members, in grievance panel hearings, and in all phases of the modernization of their developments. The CHA has received no new TOP Grants for FY2004.

***Cambridge Housing Authority FY 2004 Annual Plan attached as Section 23 of this document.***